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STATE MEDICAID EXPANSION
CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce to my colleagues the formation of a new House caucus to be known as the State Medicaid Expansion Caucus. I am delighted to cochair this caucus, along with my good friend, Congressman HANK JOHNSON, from the State of Georgia.

Madam Speaker, this caucus is 33 members strong. We want to demonstrate to recalcitrant Governors and State legislatures across the country the overwhelming public support to provide health care to low-income single adults, particularly those ages 18 to 65.

The majority of our caucus members are from States that have made the shortsighted and politically-motivated decision to exclude the very people the Medicaid program was established to help in the first place.

To date, 26 States and the District of Columbia have seized the opportunity to expand coverage to millions of Americans. These States made the wise and moral decision to not only ensure that their residents can get the care that they deserve, but they made a smart economic decision to pull billions of dollars in additional Federal funding into their economies.

These funds have the triple benefit of yielding better health outcomes for the low-income and poor, creating health care-related jobs, and driving down the aggregate cost of health care over time.

In contrast, 24 States have not yet expanded Medicaid. They have irresponsibly chosen to turn their backs on more than 5 million Americans that need this coverage. What are those 5 million Americans going to do when they get sick? What are 500,000 North Carolinians going to do when they need medical care?

Madam Speaker, I will tell you what they are going to do. They will either not seek the treatment that they need, causing their condition to get worse, which will lead to missed work and, therefore, unable to pay their bills. Ultimately, they will find themselves in a much worse situation than if they had coverage that they deserve.

The other option is that they will do what many uninsured people have always done out of necessity: go to an emergency room, be treated, and walk out with a bill that they have no ability to pay. Hospitals will then write the cost of treatment off as uncompensated care.

In order to recoup some of the lost money, hospitals will then increase the cost of their procedures, which results in higher premiums for the insured. Medicaid expansion isn't just good for our insurance premiums, but it is also good for the State's bottom line.

In North Carolina alone, expanding Medicaid will save the State more than \$65 million over the next 8 years. Expansion would benefit our economy in North Carolina, adding nearly \$1.5 billion to the State's revenue.

North Carolina drugmakers and medical device manufacturers will need to expand their workforce, adding a total of 23 jobs to the State. That is just in our State. The benefits of expansion nationally are far greater, yet the same scenario is playing out in nearly half of all of the States.

Twenty-four States' decision to not accept billions of dollars in Federal support defies logic and will prove catastrophic for the very people the Medicaid program is intended to help.

A critical point that many people overlook is the fact that, under the act, the Federal Government will pay 100 percent of the cost of expansion through the year 2016 and 90 percent of the costs thereafter.

The public demands action in States that have not expanded, and members of this caucus are tired of inaction. We are disgusted that these States have such careless disregard for poor people. We will continue to press this issue until all 50 States have expanded their Medicaid program.

Again, I thank Congressman HANK JOHNSON, the 31 other members of the State Medicaid Expansion Caucus, and the many advocacy organizations for their courage to fight for those who are being blocked from the most basic level of health care.

STATE MEDICAID EXPANSION
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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARCIA. Madam Speaker, today, I am proud to be one of the founding members of the State Medicaid Expansion Caucus, and I want to thank Congressman BUTTERFIELD and Congressman JOHNSON for their leadership.

In my home State of Florida, there are more than 750,000 people who would benefit from Medicaid expansion. These are people who fall within the coverage gap, people who make too much to receive Medicaid, but too little to receive subsidies. This makes a difference in Florida and in many States who have rejected Medicaid coverage.

Just like in many States across the country, our Governor, Governor Scott, rejected \$51 billion of Federal tax dollars—our tax dollars—money that could have provided insurance to those in need and could have created over 60,000 jobs.

This is money that will strengthen our economy and help Florida grow jobs by supporting hospitals and individuals who need help.

I urge Governor Scott and Florida's leaders in the State legislature to do what is right and take action and accept this funding.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 20 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Matthew Schramm, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bay City, Michigan, offered the following prayer:

Holy and merciful God, maker of Heaven and Earth, we come before You in thanksgiving for Your many blessings.

For the liberty to worship freely and live securely, for the freedom to pursue Your will for our lives, and for the honor of service to the peoples and nations of the Earth, we give You thanks.

We thank You that we live in a land of opportunity, and we pray that You would help us to be mindful of opportunities to help, to share, to protect, to welcome, and to proclaim what is just and what is good.

We ask Your blessing on this House, this government, and all those who serve the common good. By Your Holy Spirit, grant that they might have the courage to do just that; and may all that we do or say give honor and glory to You, Almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND MATTHEW
SCHRAMM

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reverend Matthew Schramm, Pastor of Bay City's Westminster Presbyterian Church in my district, who delivered this morning's opening and very inspiring prayer.

I am pleased to welcome Pastor Schramm and his family to the U.S. Capitol, and to thank him for his continued service to our community. Westminster Presbyterian Church is one of the oldest churches in Bay City, helping to share love, faith, and hope with its congregants and others across Michigan.

In addition to serving his congregation, Reverend Schramm served as the youngest-ever chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, the ministry agency and the board of trustees for the Nation's largest body of Presbyterians.

Reverend Schramm not only serves at the church altar, but also in the community as well. He serves on Bay County's Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Board, the Do-Care Family Enrichment Center advisory board, and the McLaren Bay medical region's Medical Ethics Advisory Board.

Pastor Schramm, on behalf of the U.S. Congress, thank you for being here today. I hope that your uplifting words that you shared with us will give us the courage to work together in pursuit of the common good for all Americans.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

THE MANMADE CRISIS ON THE TEXAS BORDER

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have been to the border many times, but I never expected to witness what I saw last Friday, a real manmade crisis. The President's failure to secure our border and uphold the rule of law has led to this mess, and now he is failing to deal with it.

While President Obama is nowhere to be found, Texas Governor Rick Perry has made stopping the crisis his number one priority. I commend him on his latest decision to deploy the Texas National Guard to help secure the southern border. I am also grateful for the men and women working around the clock to control the crisis.

Securing the border will help send a clear message to countries that, if you enter illegally, you will not be allowed to stay. And that is the right thing to do. We are a Nation of laws, and there is a process for coming to America.

Texans and the American people deserve real border security now.

PARKS AND RECREATION MONTH

(Mr. SIREs asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Parks and Recreation Month. This month plays an important role in engaging in educating Americans on the many advantages of parks and recreation facilities and how they play a vital role in the health, safety, and economies of our Nation's communities.

This nationally celebrated month aims to connect Americans with their natural outdoor environment through exercise, recreation, relaxation, and congregation. It is also an opportunity to recognize those tasked with the design, management, and conservation of our parks and recreational spaces, such as landscape architects, city planners, nonprofit organizations, and parks and recreation professionals.

Unfortunately, too many Americans, including children, live in communities with deteriorating parks and outdoor facilities, which hinders their ability to enjoy outside activities. According to the National Recreation and Parks Association, nearly three out of every 10 adults in our country do not spend time outside on a daily basis.

I believe that all cities, neighborhoods, and communities should have access to parks, which is why I introduced H.R. 2424, the Community Parks Revitalization Act. This legislation would help rehabilitate existing and develop new community parks.

EPA'S WATERS OF THE U.S. RULE

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to the EPA's proposed Waters of the U.S. rule.

This rule will dramatically expand the Clean Water Act's jurisdiction by changing current law that limits EPA's authority to "navigable waters." Under this new rule, EPA authority will apply to any body of water that has a bed, a bank, or a high water mark.

Hoosier farmers explain to me that this new rule means that large puddles left after a storm will fall under the EPA's jurisdiction. Farmers may have to get a permit to perform even the most basic tasks on their own land.

My constituents brought me these photos to show what changing the rule will mean. As you can see, this is not a stream, it is not a navigable body of water or a longstanding body of water. It should not be regulated by the EPA. It happened just after a large rainfall.

Mr. Speaker, this rule change will prevent farmers from doing their jobs, put people out of work, and increase food prices. It is bad for our Nation's landowners, it is bad for our Nation's

farmers, and it is bad for Americans trying to put an affordable meal on the table.

Mr. Speaker, I ask EPA to withdraw this rule.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT HAMILTON

(Mr. COURTNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, southeastern Connecticut last Friday suffered a terrible loss with the sudden passing of Bob Hamilton, a long time military affairs reporter for the New London Day.

Over the years, Bob covered the Grot-on sub base and earned a well-deserved reputation for accuracy, intelligence, and fairness. And that is the reason why the U.S. Navy selected him as the first reporter to be on a combat submarine in the opening days of Operation Enduring Freedom, when the opening salvo of tomahawk missiles brought down the Taliban regime.

In the last few years, Bob has been director of communications at Electric Boat shipyard, and was part of the team effort to boost submarine shipbuilding that resulted in the largest contract in the Navy to build Virginia class submarines, at two submarines a year.

Again, he passed away suddenly last Friday, leaving his wife, Kathryn, and three children, a terrible loss.

I would ask the Chamber to join me in expressing condolences to Kathryn, and salute the great example that Bob set in terms of good journalism, great advocacy for the national defense, and for being an outstanding human being.

THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION IS FAILING OUR VETERANS

(Mr. COFFMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to highlight a tragic story that emerged last week that captures how the failures of the Veterans Administration, those failures are hurting our veterans.

For 2 years, Vietnam veteran Michael Sulsona, from Graniteville, New York, a double amputee, had been waiting for a new wheelchair from the VA. His request was ignored.

On July 7, his wheelchair fell apart again while he was shopping at his local Lowe's home improvement center. What happened next captures the essence of American compassion and concern for our Nation's veterans.

Three of Lowe's employees immediately jumped into action and said to the veteran, "We're going to make this chair like new." Forty-five minutes after the store closed, they delivered on their promise.

These three men embodied the American spirit by immediately helping this